**E Japanese food**

**Eel**

Japanese people have eaten eels for a long time. They love eels. Eels live in the river and the lake. They look like a snake and they are slippery and move at night time. Those eels are very mysterious. In Japan, people started to cultivate eels in the Edo Era. However, now about 70 percent of eels are imported from China. Eels are an important part of Japanese traditional food because it contains rich protein. We have a custom to eat eels to manage the hot summer. This day is what we call “the day of eels” which is 30th July.

This is called “Unazyu” It is a famous food in Japan. Therefore a good many people eat eels on the day. If you have a chance, please try it!

**Persimmon**

It’s not a well known fact that persimmon is the Japanese national fruit.　Japanese persimmons spread to other countries and become one of the famous fruits. Persimmons are harvested in autumn. When autumn is coming, their color is changing into vivid orange. Broadly speaking, persimmons have two kinds. One is “amagaki," the sweet ones. The other is “shibugaki” the bitter ones. We can eat amagaki. However, we can’t eat shibugaki unless we hang them out to dry in the sun. Persimmons contain various vitamins such as vitamin C. So they are effective in the prevention of cold and as a beauty treatment. Persimmons are not only good for the health but also tasty. They are very sweet. Though they are delicious just to eat them, they are tastier when cooked into sweets. I’ll show you some examples of persimmon sweets. This is “kakitannpo”. It’s a kind of hosigaki, dried persimmons. This is “namagaki”, row persimmons. This is persimmon cake. It looks very delicious. Persimmons bear fruit like this. Persimmons are delicious and profitable fruit. So please try Japanese persimmons.

**Nattou**

Nattou is a kind of fermented food made of soybeans. Nattou in the picture is the normal one sold in Japan now. I’d like to introduce how to eat Nattou.

First, open the package. You will smell it. It will smell as if you were in the toilet. However a lot of Japanese like it because eating Nattou is one of the Japanese cultures. Personally, I don’t like it. There are two packs that come together with it. The dark one is soy sauce and the yellow one is mustard.

Second, mix those sauces into the Nattou. Mix it well with chopsticks for a couple of times. Then, you may find it turning sticky. There are many ways to eat the Nattou you mixed, such as adding it on rice, add an egg in it or just eat it as is.

About the origin of Nattou, there is an interesting story. Ancient Japanese use strows to preserve beans, but it went bad and fermented. Those bad beans became the first Nattou. Nattou is a very famous food in Japan. Please try it once. But if you feel that it doesn’t agree with you, just don't worry.

**Japanese-style sweets**

We are going to introduce Japanese style confectionery. These are the traditional sweets of Japan. We call them “Wagashi”.There are several types of Wagashi. Most of the them are made from rice or wheat. They might sound tasteless, however, a lot of sugar is used when they are cooked. This is because they are eaten with Japanese tea which is really bitter. Let me show you some of the Wagashis.This is “Sakuramochi”. It is often eaten on cultural holidays.This is “Manju”. This is “Dorayaki”. This is Sweet bean jelly, called “Youkan”.They are really cute and look tasty, don’t they?

**Modern Japanese sweets**

However, the time has changed. Nowadays, quite different types of sweets appears. Let’s see the most fashionable and popular sweets in Japan. This is Potato Chips. As the name implies, they are, of course, made of potatoes. They have simple fresh taste, and are moderately salty. But, I should warn you that chips have a lot of calories. So you had better not eat too much.

This is Sweet Potato Stick, called “Osatsu”. This is cooked by frying sweet potatoes. Osatsu is sweet and crispy, so everyone can enjoy it, even those who don’t like sweet potatoes. It is popular not only among the young but also the older generation.

The next one is “Hai-Chu”, a most popular chewing candy. It is very sweet and has various tastes like strawberries, grapes, apples and peaches. “Hai-Chu” has a romantic meaning. 　It is “I’ll give you a kiss”.

This is Curl. Curl is made of corn. When you eat it, it is going to melt slowly, smoothly and the taste will come into your mouth. Curl was first made by Mr. Curl, a farmer of a certain cornfield.

This is Kit Kat. You may have seen it in your country. It is light and less expensive. It costs only 100 yen in Japan. Many people buy it for Valentine's Day. You may not be able to stop eating it even if you have tasted it just once.

We did a survey in our class about which sweet is the most popular of these five, potato chips, Osatsu, Hi-chu, Curl and KitKut. The result was that out of 40 students, students who like Potato chips most were15, who like chocolate were 10, who like Hai-chu were 6, who like Osatsu were 4, and who like Curl were 2. In our class, the Potato Chip was the most popular.